American Union

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AT DENTON, MD.
BY THE
Union Publishing Company
LAWRENCE B. TOWERS, Owner
WM. H. SMITH, Manager

Entered at the Denton Post Office as second-class matter.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1919.

The Extra Feature

By S. B. HACKLEY

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For a quarter hour only the crickets had broken the silence in the Compton orchard, where old Tobias and Jemima and Minerva, their granddaughter, assorted some mighty mounds of fallen winesaps. Then Minerva spoke.

"Zack wants me to run off and marry him, grandpappy, after fodder strippin's over."

"Lord, Nervy, don't ye!" old Tobias' faded eyes were piteously beseeching. "Stay by us, honey. Nobody feels for us old ones like you do, Nervy!"

Minerva smiled faintly. "I told Zack, grandpappy, I couldn't marry him if ma wasn't willin'. She'd drive me off and surely mistreat you and grandmammy if I married against her will."

"Was Zachariah fretted?" the grandmother asked anxiously. Minerva crimsoned. They must not know how much Zack was "fretted!"

"He—he said he'd stay away until I sent for him. I—there's ma!"

In southern Appalachia it is customary for the aged father and mother to live with the youngest son in the old home. But old Tobias' log dwelling was an unusually large one—a most desirable home, and Eliza, the wife of the eldest son, by skillful machinations contrived to get Charley, the youngest son, and his wife, Phoebe, away and to get her own family installed.

Lazy herself, she depended almost entirely on her young daughter, her only child, to do the work of the house, and to keep her services she had determined Minerva should not marry any but some young man she could take into her house and rule, as she did Joshua, the girl's henpecked father.

By her orders, Zachariah Burden, who was not the "humble sort" she desired for a son-in-law, stayed away from the Compton house, but Zack was resourceful and managed often to see the gentle little creature who was like a guardian angel to the old ones.

"Cryin', Jemimy?" old Tobias, sitting smoking on their bedroom hearth that evening, asked uneasily. Jemima wiped her eyes.

"I got to studyin' about Minervy a waitin' on her happiness on account of us and it worried me some, Bias!" she confessed.

After Jemima slept, Bias still sat on the hearth. Minerva was delicate, like their little Hettie who had died sixteen years before, three months after the soldier sweetheart they had not been willing for her to marry had been laid under Cuban palms.

"Little Hettie! Little Hettie!" he murmured. "Lord, if I'd let her had her way about Jess Duty, she might not have pined away! Jess, he wasn't a bad boy—I wish I hadn't stood in her way—I do wish it, Lord!"

His pipe clattered on the hearth. His heavy groans awakened Jemima.

"The pain Doc Higgins said was from my heart, it's pinchin' a little!" he labored out, his hand clutching his chair rungs, his rugged old face chalky.

Jemima trembled as she measured out the drops the young doctor had left for him. The doctor had warned her all worry must be kept from Tobias, and he had worried because he had caught her crying about Minerva!

"You reckon you worked too hard at the apples, Bias?" she asked him when at last she got him between the bed covers.

"No. I got to thinkin' about our little Hettie. I was wishin' I could go back them sixteen years and tell the little, lovin' thing her and Jess might marry before he went to the fightin'. Then the pain struck me."

She patted his hands in gentle soothing. "Hettie and Jess wasn't long separated, Bias, honey! The Lord saw to that! Now try to go to sleep."

But it was long before he closed his eyes.

"They could come and live with us and things would be all right," Jemima heard him murmuring over and over in his fitful sleep, "if Eliza was willin'!" Then once he cried out:

"She's a-goin' like Hettie, Jemimy—like Hettie! Can't you see it?"

When he was quiet again, Jemima arose and dressed herself. If he worried himself much more he might bring on another attack, and Joel Higgins had said two attacks close together might kill him.

"I can find my way to Aaron Burden's," she said to herself, "some way, dark as it is. I'm bound to see Zack!"

Two hours later she stood breathless in the Burdens' yard on the top of the mountain. The dog slept, but fear of him set her knees shaking. With a trembling hand she tapped on the window of Zack's bedroom.

Near the dawn, when Zack helped her off the gentle mule he had led down the mountainside, her old face was shining like the eastern star.

A few days later when Eliza came home from Miranda Mulliken's "quilting," she was consumed with wrath. Naomi Rouse, whom she hated of all women, had bragged to Ran that her daughter, Magnolia, had taken Zack Burden "away" from Eliza Compton's Minerva! Long before the "fodder-pulling" was done, officious neighbors began to predict Zack's early marriage to Magnolia.

Minerva drooped visibly. Her grandfather fretted.

"Jemimy, ain't she takin' it to heart too much? Lemme give her a hint; it's just play-actin'!"

Jemima shook her head smiling. "Don't worry about Nervy. She'll come out all right. Zack don't want her told until the show day, and that ain't long off, Bias!"

The circus coming to Caneyville had advertised a prize of $10 in gold to be given to the young woman not afraid and willing to be married on an elephant's back in their ring, which advertisement doubled and tripled the size of the attending crowd on the "show day."

Early that morning Zack Burden's two mules passed the Compton wagon, en route to Caneyville. Zack rode one mule, Magnolia Rouse the other. Eliza could not restrain a look of displeasure.

"Them two are the pair that's to be married on the elephant's back!" old Bias volunteered cheerfully. "Zack's done arranged with the show folks."

This news was the last straw. Eliza turned to her daughter, her face white with wrath.

"Nervy Compton, before I'd let everybody in the county see that low-down Rouse girl take my feller right before my eyes, I'd jump in Caney river!"

Minerva smiled. "Their weddin' won't discredit me, ma. Zack's not my feller now, and all the folks know he wanted to marry me and you wouldn't let him!"

At the close of the circus performance, the largest and gentlest elephant, with a howdah on his back, was brought into the ring.

"Will the gentleman who wishes to be married please present himself?" the ringmaster called out.

Zack arose and took Magnolia's arm, but she pulled back, screeching foolishly. "I'm afraid of the elephant! I'm afraid to get close to the thing!"

"Will the gentleman try to persuade another lady then? We're bound to have a wedding!" The biggest clown rolled over in a gale of merriment, but it was tragedy to Eliza.

Zack looked about him. "I see one lady I know is not afraid of the elephant that would maybe marry me, but she's afraid of her ma!"

Eliza sprang to her feet.

"If you mean Minerva, Zack Burden," she shouted, "she needn't be afraid of me objectin'! I've concluded I'm perfectly agreeable to her marrying a young man as industrious and well-behaved as you are!"

Tears of triumph were in Eliza's eyes when, twenty minutes later, she saw Zack lift his bride to the ground.

"Where's your gold piece, Nervy?" happy old Bias whispered that evening.

"Magnolia's got that one," she whispered back, "but I've got another one just like it the show folks gave Zack for what they called the 'extry feature!'"

GOOD POINTS IN AMERICANS

Mexican Recognizes Attributes He Believes Latins Might Copy to Their Advantage.

Let us recognize this: The poetry of the American character is shown in four devotions—to women, to children, to trees and to birds. These men, whom many people unjustly suppose to be rude; these men, who make millions; these men, who maintain the rails through immense deserts; who build up formidable industries, have in their spirit these four devotions, which honor them vastly and which not a few of us Latins would like to have for the better honor and embellishment of our common existence.

There are in compensation many children and flocks of birds. Children are the kings of the parks. Everything there is for them. They rule over all, and you may see them, as I did, in Rock Creek park (Washington), with their naked legs wading in the many small streams and shouting charmingly while splashing in the crystal of the water. Notwithstanding they are smaller than the children, the birds are little kings as well. Little kings that are respected not only in the air but on the ground. Sparrows I have found on the sidewalks among the hurrying throngs of people, jumping and hopping about.—Carlos Gonzales Pena, in Universal Ilustrado, Mexico City.

A Different Vocation.

Alderman Louis B. Anderson, who is endowed with a keen sense of humor, can as a rule be depended upon to bring out the latest story finding favor among "the brethren."

A story handed to Alderman Anderson by some of the boys concerns Sam Jones, who stood 6 feet 4 inches in his stocking feet and was in training at one of the southern camps. One day the officers undertook the organization of a regimental band.

"Anybody here a bugler?" asked the company commander.

Sam stepped forward three paces.

"Play a few notes to show us how good a bugler you are," was the next direction.

"Buhglah!" exclaimed the astonished Sam. "I'se no buhglah. I thought you said burg'lah."—Chicago American.

The Strassburg Clock.

A correspondent writes that it is not at every hour that the procession of the twelve apostles makes the round of the famous clock at Strassburg, says a London paper. That takes place only at midday by middle European time. The quarters of each hour are struck by the figures of a child, a young man, an adult man, and an old man in their order, while an effigy of Death appears and strikes each full hour. Many marvelous astronomical phenomena are also shown on the clock, which automatically regulates itself at midnight on the last day of each year. It is not generally known, by the way, that a model of this unique timepiece can be seen any day by Londoners in the Horniman museum at Forest Hill.

SCRAPS of HUMOR

Her Next Number.

"What's the prima donna sore about?"

"First she sang a chanson of her own composition. That didn't get much applause."

"Well?"

"So she went out and give 'em Hail Columbia."

Technical Arguments.

"I heard a knife grinder and a carpenter arguing the other day, and each was scoring according to his trade."

"How so?"

"The first was making sharp rejoinder to the other's plane talk."

Mistakes Needed.

"Do you believe everything you see in the newspapers?"

"No," replied Senator Sorghum. "If some mistakes didn't get in now and then there'd be no use of my doing so much work from time to time to get campaign stuff into their hands."

The Times Have Changed.

"I never was so mortified in my life."

"What's the matter?"

"I was the only woman at the patriotic rally in a new gown. I knew I should have worn an old dress, but really I haven't one fit to put on."

Just Like Real Folks.

Irate Shopper—See here. You are charging $5 more for handkerchiefs than the store across the street.

Suave Profiteer—Well, you must realize, madam, that even we shopkeepers have our little differences.

A GOOD IDEA.

Carrye—When he broke the engagement did he ask you to return the ring?

Grace—No.

Carrye—Then I'd send it back to him. Under those circumstances it can't be genuine.

A Show Down.

A young grass widow makes it plain
That she has learned her biz;
"No man shall win my hand again
Until he has shown his."

Salary and Feet Not Alike.

"Sam, you have very big feet, now, haven't you?"

"Yes, boss, an' I'd have yer know they're out o' all perportion t' m' income!"

JOY OF LONELINESS.

Hunter—What I like is to get away off in the pathless woods, where I am sure there is no other human being.

Gunter—You enjoy the vast solitudes of nature?

Hunter—No. But I like to feel certain that I am not going to be mistaken for a deer by some amateur marksman.

A Discreet Pessimist.

I am a chronic pessimist,
My cares, I can't dispel 'em.
My kicks make such a lengthy list,
I'd rather work than tell 'em.

Her Kind of Style.

"Has the young lady next door to you much to finish in her piano playing?"

"I should say not. She never stops."

Experiences.

"When you visit at that house they just treat you like one of the family."

"How much have they borrowed from you?"

Had to Match.

"You were so bright yesterday and you seem so depressed."

"I had to change my tie to match my new blue suit."

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WILL LIVE FOREVER

Glory Won by American Marines Imperishable.

Famous Prussian Guard Fled Before Them at Chateau-Thierry as Sheep Before Wolves, and World Was Saved.

From Arbela to Argonne; from the day when Alexander's phalanx bore down the Persian lines to the day when the American marines scattered the best of Germany like smoke, the imperial guard of mighty sovereigns has been the keystone, the central fabric, the very basis of military power. Destroy the guard and the morale of every royal army vanishes like mist before the sun.

Fierce was the fighting on Arbela's plain, and vain the onsets of the Macedonians until the Persian guard gave way—and night saw the Persian empire in the young invader's hands.

Spain's resistless infantry shook the earth till the Spanish guard was mown down by Conde at Rocroy.

At Austerlitz the Russian ranks held fast till the czar's gigantic guards were cut through and scattered. And the soldiers at Waterloo, outflanked, outnumbered, would not yield till the guard gave back upon the fatal slope of Mont St. Jean. So went the story through the ages—and the last chapter of imperial guards and guardsmen's glory is a fitting epilogue.

Down through the ravaged fields of France came the imperial guard of Prussia, and the wearied, wornout men of France gave ground in grim despair. The guard was coming. The guard was conquering. Paris in a few more hours, and victory—a Prussian peace, won by William's matchless guards.

Then, across the wheat fields and hills, came the American marines—young fighting devildogs from overseas. What to them was the glory of the guard? What cared they for the tall, imposing figures, the uniforms, the machinelike advance of William's incomparables? The American marines went into a sheepfold—and the fate of all the world hung in the trembling balance as the struggle raged.

"We saw a few black dots break from the guard and struggle down the hill; then a dark blot on the hillside; then the guard reeled and its whole great mass came staggering down. All is lost—the guard recoils." So spoke the historians who watched at Waterloo.

So it was at Chateau-Thierry. First a few gray dots broke from the far side of the wood; then more and more; then, panic stricken, reeling, whipped, the Prussian guard came madly out and onward and away. The guard recoiled—the day was lost—Germany was lost—the empire of the world was lost.

When the guard breaks, the doom of any king is sealed. It was so three thousand years ago, and what may be the last tale of the wreckage of an imperial guard is but the final confirmation of the old, old story.

Race to the North Pole.

It seems that Captain Bartlett is not going to have things entirely his own way in his airplane expedition to the north pole, for at the present moment the British are also planning for a similar undertaking. So the airplane expedition may take on the complexion of a sportsmanlike race, with the Americans represented by Captain Bartlett and the British by Salisbury Jones of the British Northern Exploration company. Captain Bartlett contemplates going to the far north by way of north Greenland, while Mr. Jones is going by way of Spitzbergen; which, when reduced to mathematics, means that the Americans will have some two thousand miles to go while our British cousins will have only nine hundred miles of journey. Mr. Jones believes that his expedition can make the flight in about nine hours.—Scientific American.

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In French and in English.

An amusing verbal war has arisen over the propriety, meaning and extent of the French phrase "mon Dieu!" No two interpreters appear to be able to agree. The phrase in English would be "my God!" but the shades of association connected with the French form and with the English form differ so broadly that exactly equivalent expressions and usages of the phrase are difficult to reach. In French it may be an innocent exclamation, but in English-speaking lands it may be flat blasphemy. The variance seems to spring from the varying religious experiences of France and England after the Protestant reformation. In medieval Europe the presence and action of God in the religious plays habituated the populace to speak of him quite familiarly, and the sense of reverence for his name grew faint. In England, however, on account of the influence of Puritanism and then of Methodism, a great reverence for his name arose, and use of the term "my God!" became distasteful to fine natures. But "mon Dieu!" somehow sounds inoffensive.—Spokane Spokesman Review.

Spitzbergen Possibilities.

"Spitzbergen (to the north of Russia) ought to be a region overflowing with animal life and the resort of countless millions of birds beyond those that actually breed there today," said Sir Martin Conway at the Royal Geographical society, London. "It ought to give occupation and an excellent livelihood to a considerable number of hardy folk, who, if they lived and fed rightly and were properly housed, should not find the climate too extreme for a quite tolerable human life."

The ravages of irresponsible hunters, added Sir Martin, ought to be restrained by a small force of honest and efficient naval police equipped with a few seagoing motor launches.

Gas as Fuel.

Experiments in England with ordinary producer gas as a fuel for internal combustion engines has shown that as the size and power of the engine increase the loss on producer gas diminishes. The fact that coal gas, although of lower calorific value than gasoline, gives better results, is accounted for by the pressure of the gas in the bag, which delivers this fuel to the engine with little or no "back pull."

To Remove Mildew.

It is best to get at mildew stain right away before it has injured. First, try this mild treatment: Soak the stains overnight in sour milk and then place in the sun without rinsing. Repeat the treatment several times if necessary. If this does not remove them all, try lemon, moistening the stains with lemon juice and allow it to remain in the sun. If the stains are very persistent go to the druggist and ask for a few crystals of potassium permanganate. Dissolve one teaspoonful in a pint of water and apply a little of this to the stains with a medicine dropper or a clean cork and allow it to remain in five minutes. Remove any pink stain left by this chemical with a little oxalic acid. If used with care permanganate does not as a rule take out color, but try it first on an unexposed portion of the skirt.

Quotations.

"Do you approve of quotations in speeches?"

"Decidedly. Most speeches would be improved by introducing more quotations and leaving out all the original material."

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